

South Yakima Conservation District

State Legislative District #15
Congressional District #4

Other Accomplishments



33 producers direct-seeded
386 new acres.



80 acres were converted from
rill irrigation to sprinkler/drip.



Livestock Nutrient
Management Plans were
developed for 13 dairies and
one feedlot.

2008 Feature Accomplishment

Farm Implementation

Resource Challenge

Water quality impairment of the Lower Yakima River continues to be a major concern of the South Yakima Conservation District. Elevated concentrations of total suspended solids, pesticides, and nutrients are carried to the Yakima River through irrigation return flows.

Implementing Best Management Practices has been proven to benefit water quality by decreasing the amount of sediment that enters irrigation return drains.

Project Summary and Results

The South Yakima Conservation District (SYCD) provided technical and cost-share assistance to those producers wanting to improve their current surface irrigation systems. Producers implemented Best Management Practices (BMP's) that converted their surface irrigation systems to sprinkler or drip irrigation systems.

Through the Farm Implementation Grant Program SYCD continued to reduce elevated concentrations of total suspended solids, pesticides, fecal coliform, and nutrient loading to the irrigation return drains, and ultimately the Yakima River.

The goal is to efficiently and uniformly apply irrigation water to maintain adequate soil moisture for optimum plant growth without causing excessive water loss, erosion, or reduced water quality. By implementing seven sprinkler conversions, one drip conversion, and one gated pipe installation, approximately 442 tons of soil were saved on 80 acres.

Key Project Partners

WA State Department of Ecology



Rill irrigation before
conversion

Contact Information

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Board of Supervisors:
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Graham Gamache, Vice-Chair
Jon Nishi, Secretary/Treasurer
Jim Newhouse, Member
Chris Klebaum, Member

More Work To Do

Irrigated Cropland:

- While water quality has significantly improved in the District's irrigation return drains over the last several years, more work needs to be done. There are irrigation drains that still do not meet water quality standards for turbidity, fecal coliform, and nutrients.

Livestock Nutrient Management:

- Due to the changing industry regulations, new technologies, and the continuous upgrading of livestock facilities, it is imperative that funding for technical and financial assistance continue to help livestock operators maintain compliance.